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Meeting the Challenge II

Three-Year Business Plan for Education

1995/96 - 1997/98

Alberta
EDUCATION

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Education

Business Plan 1995-96 to 1997-98

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Message from the Minister

1994 was a year of significant change and improvement to Alberta's education system. It was a year of major restructuring of the governance, funding and delivery of education to centre on the needs of students. The changes, as outlined in last year's business plan for education, give more authority to schools, provide greater involvement for parents, reduce administrative expenditures, and focus education dollars on student learning. These improvements will ensure that our young people are prepared for the twenty-first century.

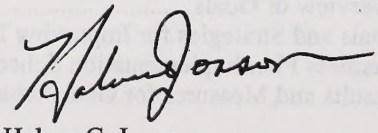
Our principles for change are to improve student learning at a cost our province can afford, to give Albertans an education system in which students come first and where all students have equitable access to a quality education, and to create an education system where decisions are made in local schools with the involvement of parents and the community.

The reduction in the number of school boards, the redefinition of roles and responsibilities in education, the legislation related to school councils, the introduction of Charter Schools, the development of a new funding framework for school boards and a new accountability framework for the education system have one common objective: the best possible education for all Alberta students.

The 1995/96 - 1997/98 Business Plan for Education continues in this direction. It clarifies earlier initiatives, fine tunes others and builds on our progress. "A Foundation for Our Children's Future" has been added to describe the education system we envision.

We are committed to achieving an effective, efficient and accountable education system. Our plan for education will ensure that young Albertans have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to become self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing members of society.

Yours sincerely,



Halvar C. Jonson
Minister of Education

A Foundation for Our Children's Future

All Alberta students will have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to be self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing members of society.

Meeting the needs of students in a rapidly changing world

Social, economic, and technological changes in our society are happening more frequently, and more rapidly than ever thought possible. Our education system will make continuous improvements to ensure that Alberta students are well prepared for the 21st century.

Quality programs and high standards for all students

Students will know clearly what they are expected to learn. Schools will achieve excellence by setting high standards and expectations, and by encouraging students to develop high expectations for themselves and to take responsibility for their learning. Increased testing and improved reporting will ensure that students, teachers, parents and other Albertans know and understand what our young people have achieved and what they still need to learn.

Students come first!

The efforts of the entire education system will focus on providing all students with equitable opportunities, regardless of their family income, where they live in Alberta, or whether they have special needs.

Help students be the best they can be

All students will have access to education programs that develop individual potential and prepare them for daily living and the challenges of the world of work and lifelong learning.

Students will have a solid knowledge of the language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies; and an appreciation for our history, our literature and arts, and the cultures that make up our country. They will be able to solve problems, to cope with uncertainty, and to find opportunities in change.

Education is everybody's business

All Albertans - students, parents, the community, teachers, principals, trustees, superintendents, business and government - share the responsibility to provide all Alberta students with the best possible education.

Parents and communities will help schools decide how to use available resources to enable students to learn and meet provincial standards. Boards will ensure that the focus of all spending is on supporting and improving student learning.

Teachers play a vital role	Schools and teachers will demonstrate that students are learning. Teachers need to be well-prepared to help students meet performance standards and attain learning expectations. They have the freedom to teach, and the desire to continue to develop new skills, share in leadership and decision-making, and support other teachers.
Opportunities for choice	There will continue to be a diverse range of programs and schools to serve students from different backgrounds and to support community values. Parents and students will have greater opportunity to select schools and programs.
Excellent, affordable education	Albertans will receive full value for their education tax dollars. All levels of the education system - provincial, school jurisdiction and school - will operate efficiently and keep administrative costs under control to ensure that more education dollars are directed to the classroom. The province will have a quality education system at a cost Albertans can afford.
Accountable to Albertans	Albertans will have the information they need to know that the province has a solid education system, that progress has been made with available resources, and that improvements are under way.

Introduction

Albertans' expectations for education are high and continue to grow. Our young people must be well equipped to succeed in our rapidly changing world. To meet this challenge, Alberta Education must continue to make improvements to education in the province.

The course for an improved education system was set in *Meeting the Challenge: Three-Year Business Plan: 1994/95 - 1996/97*. It was developed as part of a government-wide effort to identify the core business of government, put plans in place in all departments and address fiscal realities. The plan focused on restructuring the education system to direct resources to the classroom and improve education for students.

Education's plan has been revised and extended to include 1997/98 as part of a government-wide process of annual review and revision to keep plans current and to meet government targets. This updated plan articulates the beliefs underlying the restructuring of the education system, builds on our progress over the past year, and reflects the outcomes of the consultations on roles and responsibilities in education.

This updated business plan for improving education in Alberta continues to focus on students, classrooms and communities. It will ensure a solid public education system for the province and access to a quality education for all students in Alberta.

Overview: Business Plan for Education - 1995/96 to 1997/98

Issues & Challenges

- building a strong social and economic future for Alberta
- increasing public demand for accountability
- increasing public expectations for education
- coordinating services for children
- changing the governance and delivery of education
- addressing the fiscal inequities among school jurisdictions
- harnessing technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of education
- assisting government in achieving a balanced budget by 1996/97
- changing the way government does business

Context

- School Act
- Alberta Education Mission Statement
- Goals of Schooling
- Goals of Education
- Definitions of Basic Education
- Core Values
- Vision for the '90s
- Alberta Education Results Reports
- Policies and Programs of Study
- Budget '93 and '94
- Meeting the Challenge 94/95 - 96/97

Goals

1. Focus education on what students need to know; ensure that high standards are established, communicated and achieved.
2. Provide parents with greater opportunity to select schools and programs of their choice and enable greater parent/community involvement in education.
3. Improve the coordination of services for special needs children.
4. Improve teaching.
5. Achieve increased efficiencies and effectiveness in the education system through restructuring the governance and delivery of education.
6. Ensure that all school boards and schools are adequately and equitably funded.
7. Manage Alberta Education effectively and efficiently to achieve department and government goals.
8. Ensure that the cost of education is reasonable and under control.
9. Ensure that the education system is open and accountable.

Desired Results

1. Students, teachers and parents know what is expected of Alberta students.
   - Students achieve the standards in the provincial curriculum.
   - Students are prepared for entry into post-secondary education and the workplace.
   - Alberta students perform favourably compared to students outside the province.
2. Parents and students have increased opportunities to select schools and programs.
3. Students with special needs have access to the services they require.
4. Teachers are able to help students acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need for the future.
5. Schools and school jurisdictions are effective and efficient.
6. All students have equitable educational opportunities.
7. Alberta Education is reduced and focuses on business plan and core functions.
   - Productivity of the department is increased.
8. The costs of basic education meet government target.
9. Information is used to make improvements throughout the education system.
   - Albertans have timely information on student achievement and the performance and cost of the education system.

Strategies (Selected)

1. Set and communicate high standards for student learning
   - Complete development of Career and Technology Studies
   - Expand achievement testing/reduce testing duplication, and expand diploma exam program
2. Increase program and school choice within and between school jurisdictions
   - Pilot Charter Schools
3. Implement results of coordination of services pilot projects
4. Establish competencies for beginning and experienced teachers
   - Update teacher preparation and certification requirements
   - Coordinated approach to teacher professional development
5. Implement school-based management
   - Increase shared services among school boards and other agencies
   - Increase use of technology to deliver programs
   - New roles and responsibilities in education
6. Implement new funding framework and new capital plan
   - Phase in uniform provincial mill rates
7. Downsize Department of Education
   - Restructure/privatize some functions
   - Implement employee performance management system
8. Meet budget target
   - Limit school board spending on administration
9. Education performance measures
   - Comprehensive management reviews
   - School board education plans
   - School board and provincial reports on results
   - Provincial approval of superintendent appointments

Progress 1994/95

Meeting the Challenge, the 1994/95 to 1996/97 business plan for education, was published in February 1994. It set out nine goals and 42 strategies to improve student learning, the delivery of education and the cost-effectiveness of the education system through restructuring. Major progress has been made in key areas in the first year.

The Minister of Education appointed five MLA Implementation Teams to support key plan initiatives: Roles and Responsibilities, Regionalization, Funding Framework, Business Involvement and Technology Integration, and Accountability Framework.

Key Accomplishments 1994/95

Full Provincial Funding of Education

- Provincial responsibility established for setting provincial education tax rates and distributing education property tax revenues
- Resolution to fiscal inequities among school jurisdictions
- New framework for funding school boards developed and announced for the 1995/96 school year.

Capital Funding

- Provincial capital funding reduced $100 million (1991-1995 Capital Plan) and local capital spending reduced
- New capital program developed for 1995/96.

Governance

- Reduction from 1992/93 in the number of school boards from 181 to 57 and in the number of trustees from 1,169 to 435 effective January 1, 1995. All non-operating boards have been eliminated.
- Francophone Governance implemented.

Legislation

- **School Act** amended to include provision for full provincial funding of education, provincial approval of superintendent appointments, school-based management and charter schools.

Curriculum and Learning Expectations

- About half of the Career and Technology Studies (CTS) program was available for schools to use in September 1994. Field testing of the rest of the program will be completed in the 1994/95 school year.
- Western provinces agreed to develop common learning standards in mathematics, Grades 1 to 12.

Department Downsized

- 18 per cent reduction in department staff since 1992/93
- Two-thirds of department's three-year operating budget reduction target met
- Regional Services restructured; Grande Prairie and Red Deer Regional Offices closed
- Materials Resource Centre (MRC), Calgary closed; Edmonton MRC combined with the Learning Resources Distributing Centre.

Deficit Reduction

- 80 per cent of the targeted reduction for education achieved in 1994/95.

Accountability

- Primary Performance Measures for education developed and published in ***Measuring Up***, government's preliminary report on performance.

Mission and Mandate for Education

Mission

"The Best Possible Education For All Alberta Students."

Mandate

Education is responsible for ensuring that all students have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to be self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing members of society.

Beliefs

We believe:

- All students can learn and experience success
- All students have the right of equitable access to a quality basic education program that meets their diverse needs
- Students are responsible for participating fully in the achievement of their educational success;
- All students must have strong reading, writing and math skills with which to analyze data and develop ideas and inferences
- Students are entitled to a safe, secure and caring learning environment where each individual is respected and valued
- Education is an essential building block of our society's future

- The education system must provide our society with creative and critical thinkers and problem solvers, who are prepared for the world of work, post-secondary studies, lifelong learning and citizenship in a complex world
- The education system must provide opportunities for students to acquire the entrepreneurial and technical skills and work habits required for success in the rapidly changing, high-tech global economy
- Quality educational programs develop the total person - social, physical, intellectual, cultural and emotional dimensions
- High learning expectations challenge all students to learn and achieve
- The success of students is the shared responsibility of students, parents, school, community and government
- Parents should have opportunities for meaningful involvement in important decisions about their children's education
- Parents and the public should have access to timely information about the performance and cost of the education system
- The satisfaction of students, parents and the public is critical to the success of the education system
- Resources and relevant decision making should be located where education happens
- All those responsible for decisions about education, including the expenditure of education funds, are accountable to Albertans for actions and results
- Available resources can maintain and improve the quality of education for students if managed efficiently and innovatively
- The provision of educational funding must be fair, adequate and affordable

Basic Education - the Definition

The school's first obligation is to provide a solid core program consisting of language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

Schools have the responsibility to provide instructional programs that ensure students will meet the provincial graduation requirements and are prepared for entry into the workplace or post-secondary studies. As well, schools must ensure that students understand the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and have the skills and disposition to pursue learning throughout their lives.

Learning Expectations

Schools will be accountable for their students' achievement of provincial learning standards including employability skills consistent with workplace requirements.

Schools will provide a variety of learning experiences so that students:

- Can read for information, understanding and enjoyment
- Write and speak clearly, accurately and appropriately for the context
- Use mathematics to solve problems in business, science and daily-life situations
- Understand the physical world, ecology and the diversity of life

- Understand the scientific method and the societal context of science
- Know the history and geography of Canada and have a general understanding of world history and geography
- Understand Canada's political, social, and economic systems within a global context
- Can research an issue thoroughly
- Know how to work independently and as part of a team
- Respect the cultural diversity of Canada and appreciate literature and the arts
- Know the basic requirements of an active, healthful lifestyle
- Recognize the importance of accepting responsibility for their physical and emotional well-being and appreciate the role of the family and other relationships to that well-being
- Manage time and other resources needed to complete a task
- Use computer and communication technologies
- Demonstrate initiative, leadership, flexibility and persistence
- Evaluate their own endeavours and continually strive to improve
- Have the desire and realize the need for life-long learning

Schools also may provide the opportunity for students to acquire a second language. When the primary language of instruction is not English, students must be able to demonstrate competence in reading and writing English.

Education Delivery

Schools must engage students in a variety of activities that enable them to acquire the expected learnings.

The expected learnings can be achieved in many ways: many students will require concrete, hands-on approaches to achieve the expected results. Schools will have authority to deploy resources and may use any instructional technique acceptable to the community as long as the results are achieved. Schools and teachers are encouraged to take advantage of different delivery options such as distance education and workplace learning.

Senior high school students will be able to learn employability skills in the workplace. The school will provide support to ensure a broad theoretical understanding of those specific skills. The province will provide high school credit for workplace learning that is certified by the school and by the employer. This will ensure that students have the skills demanded by business and gain recognized work experience to assist in making the transition from school to work.

Wherever possible, school programs and credit granting procedures will be redesigned to ensure compatibility with post-secondary and occupational training programs, thus improving the efficiency of the entire system by removing duplication.

Achievement Standards

Individual school results will vary but our total provincial system must be accountable for ensuring that a very high proportion of students are successful.

The province will define acceptable standards and standards of excellence for student achievement. Business will be a key player in defining the specific learning requirements of industry. Schools, school jurisdictions and the province will assess and report on the full range of student learning.

The school's primary responsibility is to ensure that students meet or exceed the provincial standards, as reflected in student learning expectations, provincial achievement tests, diploma exams and graduation requirements. Schools will consult with parents and other members of their communities about student performance, and set specific improvement targets.

Spending Targets for Education

The plan's primary purpose is to maintain and improve Alberta's education system while meeting the spending targets of the province. This reflects the priority of Albertans for quality education at an affordable cost. The restructuring of the education system ensures that every available dollar is spent on the education of students.

Full Provincial Funding

The provincial government has assumed full responsibility for the funding of education in the province. By doing so, the province can ensure that the education system is adequately and equitably funded as well as efficiently managed.

The funding of school boards includes a grant from the provincial General Revenue Fund (GRF) and an equal per-student payment from revenue generated from the property tax for education raised by the provincial government and put into the Alberta School Foundation Fund (ASFF). Payment from the ASFF to opted-out school boards takes into consideration the revenue raised on their declared tax base so that all school boards access the same per-student amount from the property tax.

The Alberta School Foundation Fund is made up of revenue raised by the provincial government from the total property tax base and revenue from the provincial levy on non-residential property (formerly SFPF). These tax revenues, provided only to public and separate school boards, support a quality public education for all students based upon provincially determined standards and learning expectations. An ASFF Audit Board will monitor the Alberta School Foundation Fund to ensure that the money in the fund is distributed only to public and separate school boards.

Property tax rates for education have varied widely across the province depending on the assessment base in each school jurisdiction. Now that the province has responsibility for the property tax for education, a policy of fairness in education taxation will be implemented. Starting in 1995 uniform provincial mill rates, one for residential and farm properties and one for non-residential properties, will be phased-in. By 1997 all properties, regardless of where they are located in the province, will be taxed for education purposes at similar rates. These rates will be at or below the 1993 provincial average net mill rates of 7.64 for residential and farm properties and 11.02 for non-residential properties.

School boards also have the option of going to their supporters every three years during a general election to get approval to raise from the local tax base a maximum of three per cent of their budget for specific purposes.

New Funding Framework

The funding framework allocates funds to school boards on an equitable basis that recognizes the numbers of students served, the programs they need and cost differences due to the special characteristics of certain school jurisdictions.

The funding to school boards consists of three blocks:

- Instruction Block - provides for the cost of instructional programs and services
- Support Block - provides for the cost of operating and maintaining schools, board governance, system administration and student transportation
- Capital Block - covers the cost of school buildings authorized by the School Buildings Board

The new funding framework is consistent with the restructuring of the education system. It limits administrative spending to ensure most resources are directed to instruction so that all students can be offered a quality education at a cost Albertans can afford.

Spending Profile

Altogether the GRF, the ASFF and the requisitions of opted-out separate school boards support instruction, administration, plant operations and transportation in public and separate school systems. The GRF contribution to education also funds school capital projects, provides operating funds for the provincial Department of Education and provides support to private schools and the Teachers' Retirement Fund.

The spending profile for education reflects accounting policy changes and includes spending from the ASFF and the local requisition for opted-out separate school boards.

Table 1 **Spending Profile for Education**

	1992/93 Actual	1993/94 Actual	1994/95 Forecast	1995/96 Projection	1996/97 Projection	1997/98 Projection
Provincial Funding						
General Revenue Fund ($billions)	1.748	1.782	1.537	1.485	1.466	1.486
ASFF* ($billions)	1.114	1.168	1.192	1.201	1.208	1.216
Total Provincial	2.862	2.950	2.729	2.686	2.674	2.702
Local Requisition Opted-Out Boards ($ billions)	.130	.137	.139	.140	.140	.140
Total Spending (Provincial & Opted-Out)+ ($billions)	2.992	3.087	2.868	2.826	2.814	2.842
Annual Change ($millions)	—	95	(219)	(42)	(12)	28
Annual Change (%)	—	3.2	(7.1)	(1.5)	(0.4)	1.0

* ASFF established in 1994/95; includes local requisition for public and non-opted out separate school boards

\+ includes enrollment growth (estimated at 1% per year for 1995/96 - 1997/98)

Reinvestment in Education

The funds available to public and separate schools increase from the 1995/96 school year to the 1997/98 school year by about 1.5 per cent. As a result of the effects of the Funding Framework, which shifts education dollars from administration to instruction, and of the increase in provincial funding for public and separate schools, there will be an estimated $100 million more available for instruction in the 1997/98 school year than in the 1994/95 school year.

The spending profile also includes:

- Budget reductions for the Department and the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities
- $95 million annually in school capital funding for 1996/97 and 1997/98
- Basic ECS program of 240 hours, starting in 1995/96
- Net reduction in the provincial funding of education (GRF and ASFF) from 1992/93 to 1997/98 of $160 million or 5.6 per cent
- Net reduction in total education spending, including requisitions of opted-out separate school boards, from 1992/93 to 1997/98 of $150 million or five per cent

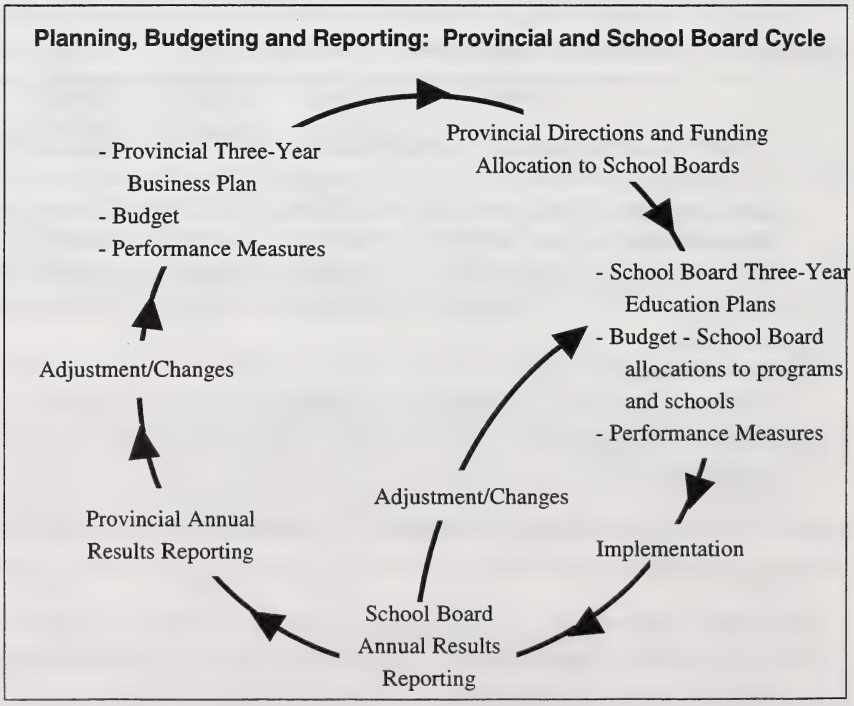
Integrating Planning, Budgeting and Accountability

The province believes that the education system must be accountable to the public for the use of funds and the results achieved. Provincial reporting on education funding and business plan results will be accessible and complete. Similarly school boards and schools are accountable to the provincial government and to their communities for the use of education funding and the results achieved.

Consistent with this direction, school boards are expected to align their plans and budgets with the provincial three-year business plan for education. Initially school boards will submit to the Minister an interim one-year plan for the 1995/96 school year, followed by a three-year education plan commencing in 1996/97. Thereafter school boards will review and update their plans annually and report on their progress using a common set of provincial performance measures as well as measures determined by the jurisdiction.

Performance measures will give the province, school jurisdictions and schools information they can use to make adjustments and changes to improve education.

Planning, Budgeting and Reporting: Provincial and School Board Cycle


Provincial Directions and Funding Allocation to School Boards
- School Board Three-Year Education Plans
- Budget - School Board allocations to programs and schools
- Performance Measures
Implementation
School Board Annual Results Reporting
Provincial Annual Results Reporting
Adjustment/Changes
- Provincial Three-Year Business Plan
- Budget
- Performance Measures
Adjustment/Changes

Goals, Strategies, Results and Measures

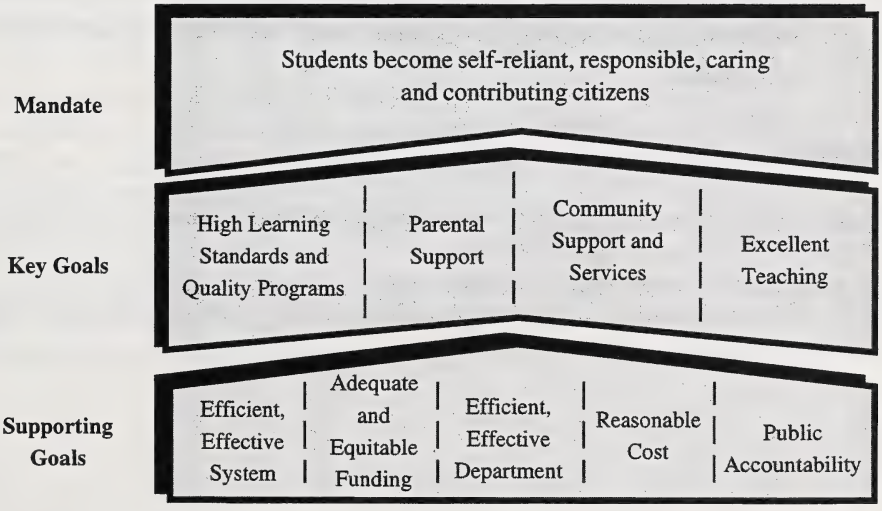
Overview of Goals

Education's mandate is to ensure that students have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to be self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing members of society. The nine goals in the business plan help to accomplish this by improving all aspects of the education system. The overall purpose of the plan is to improve student learning.

Four of the nine goals are key to achieving education's mandate and directly support student learning. The ability of students to meet high standards depends on many things, including how well teachers, students and parents understand learning expectations and work toward achieving them. The efforts of parents, teachers and the community are important to improving student learning, as is the increased coordination of community services for children.

The remaining five goals support the achievement of the four key goals. They address equitable funding, administrative efficiency and public accountability. Equitable funding will ensure that all students have a fair share of resources to support the quality programs and services they require to meet their individual needs. Efficient and effective administration, both at the provincial and local levels, will ensure that more of the available funds are directed toward instruction and will keep spending under control. Public accountability will provide an incentive for educators and their partners to use performance information to chart progress and to make on-going improvements to all levels of the education system - province, school boards and schools.

Goals for Achieving Education's Mandate



Note: Provincial performance measures will be used to report annually to Albertans on student achievement and the performance and cost of the education system.

Goals and Strategies for Improving Education

Key Goals

Goal 1: Focus education on what students need to learn; ensure that high standards are established, communicated and achieved.

Key Strategies

1.1 Establish and communicate clear learning outcomes and high standards for basic education.
1.2 Complete curriculum in Career and Technology Studies by 1996/97, involving business in the development and delivery of some skills programs.
1.3 Expand the provincial achievement testing program to test grade 3 students in reading, writing and math skills and to test Grades 6 and 9 students in the four core subjects each year starting in the 1994/95 school year.
1.4 Develop diploma examinations in Math 33 and Social Studies 33 to be administered starting in the 1995/96 school year.
1.5 Reduce duplication and repetition in curriculum development within Alberta, and streamline the curriculum development process.
1.6 Reduce duplication in assessment in Alberta by providing opportunities for teachers to mark their students' provincial achievement tests and use the results in end-of-year assessment of students, starting in the 1994/95 school year.

Goal 2: Provide parents with greater opportunity to select schools and programs of their choice and enable greater parent/community involvement in education.

Key Strategies

2.1 Enable parents and teachers to have a meaningful role in decisions about policies, programs, budgets, and activities in their schools.
2.2 Enable increased business and community participation in education.
2.3 Enable students to attend a public school of choice within or outside their school jurisdictions.
2.4 Pilot charter schools starting in 1995/96.

Goal 3: Improve the coordination of services for children with special needs.

Key Strategies

3.1 Implement results of pilot projects which support student learning by coordinating services for children with special needs, by 1996/97.
3.2 In cooperation with other departments and agencies, remove barriers to coordination and integration of services for children with special needs to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Goal 4: Improve teaching.

Key Strategies

4.1 Establish competencies for beginning and experienced teachers, by 1995/96.
4.2 Update teacher preparation and certification requirements, by 1996/97.
4.3 Develop a coordinated approach to the delivery of professional development opportunities for teachers.

Supporting Goals

Goal 5: Achieve increased efficiencies and effectiveness in the education system through restructuring the governance and delivery of education.

Key Strategies

5.1 Implement school-based management, by 1996/97.
5.2 Implement new roles and responsibilities throughout the education system, by 1996/97.
5.3 Determine skills and competencies to be used by school boards and education associations to in-service principals and superintendents.
5.4 Achieve cost reductions through joint planning and delivery of programs and services among school jurisdictions and other local agencies.
5.5 Reduce the duplication between secondary and post-secondary institutions and programs.
5.6 Increase access, expand program choice, and improve efficiency through technology, telecommunications, and off-campus instruction.

Goal 6: Ensure that all school boards and schools are adequately and equitably funded.

Key Strategies

6.1 Implement a new provincial framework that allocates funding to school boards for distribution to schools to meet education objectives and standards and ensures equity, efficiency and effective practices, by 1995/96.
6.2 Phase-in uniform provincial mill rates by the 1997 tax year.
6.3 Implement new capital plan for 1996/97 to 1997/98.
6.4 Implement a budgeting and reporting system that ensures accountability by school jurisdictions for provincial funding in 1995/96.

Goal 7: Manage Alberta Education effectively and efficiently to achieve department and government goals.

Key Strategies

7.1 Achieve efficiencies in budget preparation, curriculum development, purchasing and data systems.
7.2 Increase cost recovery on selected department services.
7.3 Restructure or privatize operations as appropriate (e.g. the warehousing operations of the Learning Resources Distributing Centre).
7.4 Explore restructuring options for the instructional services component of the Alberta Distance Learning Centre.
7.5 Consider restructuring options for the Alberta School for the Deaf as a public institution.
7.6 Implement an employee performance management system linked to the business plan, by 1995/96.
7.7 Develop a system to reward department staff for innovations and productivity improvements consistent with the business plan, by 1995/96.

Goal 8: Ensure that the cost of education is reasonable and under control.

Key Strategies

8.1 Meet the budget targets established by government.
8.2 Ensure that 1997 provincial education mill rates are at or below the 1993 weighted average.
8.3 Limit school board spending on administration through the funding framework starting in the 1995/96 school year.

Goal 9: Ensure that the education system is open and accountable.

Key Strategies

9.1 Use provincial performance measures to assess and report regularly to the public on student learning and achievement, and the performance and cost of Alberta's education system, starting June 1995.

9.2 Conduct comprehensive management reviews where local program results and/or costs show problem areas or superior performance, by 1996/97.

9.3 Require school boards to develop and implement education plans that meet provincial requirements and local needs, starting with the 1995/96 school year.

9.4 Require school boards to implement a designated set of performance measures for mandatory annual reporting to the province, parents and the public starting in the 1995/96 school year.

9.5 Implement Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy program for Alberta Education by 1995/96.

Business Implementation Schedule

Selected Key Strategies		Fiscal Years			
		94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98
Goal 1	**Set and Communicate High Standards for Education**				
	◆ Clear learning outcomes and high standards for core subjects are completed and communicated			X	
	◆ Career and Technology Studies, involving business in development, completed			X	
	◆ Reduce duplication of achievement testing		X		
	◆ Provincial assessment program expanded		X		
Goal 2	**Provide More Choice and Increase Parental Involvement**				
	◆ School and program choice within and between jurisdictions			X	
	◆ Charter schools piloted		X		
Goal 3	**Improve Coordination of Services for Special Needs Children**				
	◆ Recommendations from pilot projects implemented			X	
Goal 4	**Improve Teaching**				
	◆ Competencies for beginning and experienced teachers established		X		
	◆ Teacher preparation and certification requirements updated			X	
Goal 5	**Restructure Education System**				
	◆ Legislation to restructure education enacted	**Done**			
	◆ School-based management implemented			X	
	◆ Number of school boards reduced to about 60	**Done**			
	◆ Roles and responsibilities of schools, school boards and the Department clarified	**On Target**			
	◆ Francophone governance implemented	**Done**			
	◆ Efficiences and program access increased through technology				X
Goal 6	**Ensure Adequate and Equitable Funding**				
	◆ Provincial requisition for education property taxes	**Done**			
	◆ Uniform provincial mill rates in effect for the 1997 tax year				X
	◆ New provincial funding framework implemented		X		
	◆ New Capital Plan implemented		X		
	◆ Budgeting and reporting system to account for provincial funds in place		X		
Goal 7	**Manage Alberta Education Efficiently and Effectively**				
	◆ Alberta Education reorganized and downsized	**Done**			
	◆ Cost recovery of department services increased		X		
	◆ Employee performance management system linked to business plan		X		
Goal 8	**Cost of Education is Reasonable and Under Control**				
	◆ Budget target met	**Done**			
	◆ School board spending on capital limited	**Done**			
	◆ School board spending on administration limited		X		
	◆ Provincial education mill rate at or below the 1993 average				X
Goal 9	**More Open and Accountable Education System**				
	◆ Provincial reports on designated measures to public	**Dec/94**			
	◆ Provincial approval of superintendent appointments	**Done**			
	◆ Comprehensive management review system in place			X	
	◆ School board education plans developed		X		
	◆ School board reports on designated measures to public		X		
	◆ Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act implemented		X		

Results and Measures for Goal Achievement

Key Goals

Goal 1: Focus education on what students need to learn; ensure that high standards are established, communicated and achieved.

Results

- Alberta's learning standards meet the expectations of Albertans.
- Students, teachers and parents know what is expected of Alberta students.
- Students achieve the standards in the provincial curriculum.
- Students receive the education they need to prepare them for entry into the workplace and post-secondary studies.
- Alberta students perform favorably compared to students outside the province.

Measures

- Per cent of Albertans who are satisfied that the curriculum focuses on what students need to learn and that learning standards are high enough.
- Per cent of employers and post-secondary institutions satisfied with Alberta's high school graduation requirements.
- Per cent of Grade 9 students who complete high school.
- Per cent of students who achieve an acceptable standard or standard of excellence on provincial achievement tests and diploma examinations.
- Per cent of students, parents, employers, post-secondary instructors and the public who are satisfied with the preparation of students for the workplace or post-secondary education.
- Performance of Alberta students on national and international assessments compared with students in other provinces and countries.
- Literacy rate of Albertans aged 16 to 24.

Goal 2: Provide parents with greater opportunity to select schools and programs of their choice and enable greater parent/community involvement in education.

Results

- Parents have opportunities to choose schools and programs for their children within the public education system.
- Business and the community have a meaningful role in education.

Measures

- Per cent of parents who are satisfied with their children's schooling.
- Number of businesses, government and non-government agencies offering educational opportunities to students.

- Per cent of parents, teachers, businesses and community representatives who are satisfied with their role in decision making.

Goal 3: Improve the coordination of services for children with special needs.

Results

- Students with special needs have access to the services they require.

Measures

- Per cent of parents of children with special needs who are satisfied with the accessibility, effectiveness, relevance and efficiency of services for their children.
- Number of sites where coordinated/integrated services are available for children with special needs.

Goal 4: Improve teaching.

Results

- Teachers have the skills and knowledge required to help students learn.
- Teachers have the authority to choose appropriate teaching strategies to help improve their students' learning.

Measures

- Per cent of teachers and principals who believe that:
  - teachers' current knowledge, skills and attributes match their teaching assignments; and
  - teachers have the authority to choose appropriate teaching strategies.
- Per cent of principals and
  - beginning teachers who believe that teacher education programs adequately prepare teachers for entry into teaching; and
  - experienced teachers who believe that teachers' professional development opportunities enhance their teaching skills.

Contributing Goals

Goal 5: Achieve increased efficiencies and effectiveness in the education system through restructuring the governance and delivery of education.

Results

- School jurisdictions and schools are efficient in their use of available resources.
- School jurisdictions and schools are effective in providing all students with opportunities for success.

Measures

- Per cent of school jurisdiction spending on instruction.
- Per cent of parents satisfied that their children's school is well run.
- Per cent of parents satisfied that their school system is well run.
- Per cent of students who are satisfied with:
  - their school overall;
  - variety and challenge in classroom and school activities;
  - opportunities to make decisions about their learning and career paths;
  - clarity of expectations for their learning, behavior, and involvement at school; and
  - the help and support they receive from school staff.

Goal 6: Ensure that all school boards and schools are adequately and equitably funded.

Results

- All students have equitable educational opportunities.

Measures

- Number and type of course and program offerings by school jurisdiction.
- Differences in per student expenditures by school jurisdiction.

Goal 7: Manage Alberta Education effectively and efficiently to achieve department and government goals.

Results

- Department is reduced and focuses directly on the business plan for education and the mission, mandate and core functions of the department.
- Department productivity is increased.

Measures

- Per cent reduction in Alberta Education staff.
- Reduction in the cost per student of department services.

Goal 8: Ensure that the cost of education is reasonable and under control.

Results

- The cost of delivering education meets government target.

Measures

- Spending per student per school year, from 1992/93.
- Interprovincial comparisons of:
  - per student expenditures,
  - per capita expenditures.
- Average annual provincial equalized mill rates, from 1993.
- Cost of school construction per square metre, from 1992/93.
- Per cent of parents who are satisfied that they are receiving value for their tax dollars in their children's school.

Goal 9: Ensure that the education system is open and accountable.

Results

- The province, school jurisdictions and schools systematically use performance measure results to make continuous improvements to education.
- Albertans have timely and meaningful information about student achievement, and the performance and cost of education at the provincial, school jurisdiction and school levels.

Measures

- Per cent of Albertans who are satisfied with access to and quality of information about the education system's performance and cost from the province, school jurisdictions and schools.
- Per cent of parents who are satisfied with their access to school information about their children's progress and educational achievement.

Appendix Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities

Mission

To enhance and promote the opportunity for full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in the life of the province.

Goal 1

Government policies and programs recognize and incorporate the needs of people with disabilities in order for them to participate in community life.

Result

People with disabilities will have the same range of opportunities to participate, and the same responsibilities to contribute to the community, as other Albertans.

Strategies

- Continue to seek, from relevant departments, full implementation of recommendations in policy review documents prepared for government by the Premier's Council: *Action Plan 1990, Alternative Communications 1992, Removing Barriers 1993, Standards for Interpreting 1994.*
- Collaborate in departmental and interdepartmental committee activities and represent the needs of people with disabilities in those activities.
- Prepare reports and responses to government documents on issues relevant to people with disabilities.
- Consult with community representatives about new or emerging disability issues and promote their involvement where appropriate in government forums/meetings.

Measures

- Barriers addressed by government policy.
- Inclusion by government of persons with disabilities (other than Premier's Council) in planning and decision making processes (e.g., advisory committees).

Goal 2

A Community Supports Program is created from existing programs and resources, and meets the personal and technical support needs of Albertans to enable them to live and participate in the community.

Result

Albertans with disabilities, including those caused by aging, will live in the community in greater numbers, for a longer time, and institutional placement will be minimized.

Strategies

- Participate in Health processes to begin detailed design and implementation of the Community Supports Model concept.
- Collaborate with departments in the processes of development and implementation.
- Ensure consumer participation in development and implementation of the Community Supports Model.
- Facilitate consultation and information sharing throughout the process with all relevant stakeholders.

Measures

- Stakeholder satisfaction with process and product.

Goal 3

Alberta Information Network (AIN) is accessible to Albertans, providing quality information about disability programs and services in Alberta, and is self-sufficient (no further Council support required).

Result

Albertans will have easy access to information about government disability related programs and services, community agency services and links to generic services. Frustration among consumers and providers will be reduced.

Strategies

- Get AIN functioning with comprehensive information about all provincial government programs and services available for persons with disabilities, and make it accessible provincially through an information officer.
- Complete a comprehensive business plan including detailed marketing and financial strategies.
- Implement initial phases of business plan to secure 1996-97 funding for AIN.
- Negotiate partnership agreements with community organizations to add comprehensive information about community programs for people with disabilities locally.

Measures

- Customer satisfaction with:
  - quality of information provided by AIN
  - level of service provided by information officer (e.g. personal knowledge, time to process request, friendliness)
  - system software including ease of use, functionality and reliability.

- Partner satisfaction with implementation of partnership agreements.

Three-Year Financial Plan

- Budget for 1994-95 is 20 per cent less than for 1993-94; no further decreases are expected for the remainder of the business plan.

- The Premier's Council budget for 1997-98 will remain the same as for the previous three years.

- Staff salaries will remain frozen at current levels.

- No change in staffing or structure of the Council is anticipated.

- Resources in Professional, Technical and Labour Services will be applied to the achievement of the goals outlined above.

- Where possible, projects will continue to be undertaken jointly with other departments or agencies, in order to achieve results at lower cost.

- **1997-98**: In anticipation of the sunset clause in the Premier's Council Act (effective July 1998), the Council will commission an independent review of the structure, function, and effectiveness of the Council since 1988. The review will involve consultation inside and outside government and will be funded with existing resources.

  The Council will be ready to make a recommendation to Cabinet late in 1997 about the future of the Council - should it continue to exist? in the same form or as some other mechanism? with what resources and mandate? The report will enable Cabinet to make a decision in advance of the 1998-99 fiscal year.

Three Year Spending Targets:

	1993/94 Actual	1994/95 Forecast	**1995/96 Target**	1996/97 Target	1997/98 Target
Total Budget (dollars)	650,000	596,000	595,000	595,000	595,000

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